COMMUNITIES AT WORK

ISSUE 7 FALL 2007

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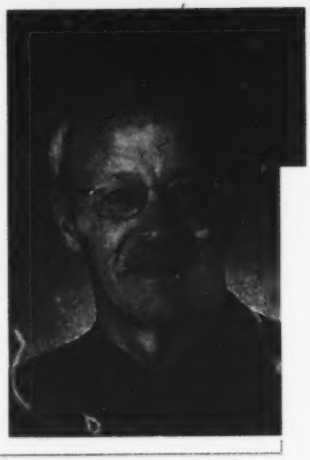


September 2007

Welcome, everyone, to the fall issue of Communities at Work.

It wasn't just the weather that was hot in Saskatchewan this summer – our economy is hot as well. Saskatchewan has enjoyed over a year of continuous record-breaking job creation. Statistics Canada reports that, in June, there were 509,000 people working in Saskatchewan. That's 6,500 more jobs than the previous June record, set in 2006.

In October, the Province of Saskatchewan pays tribute to two sectors that have contributed so much to our economic success: small business and the co-operative movement.

October 14 to 20 has been designated Small Business Week and Co-op Week. Both small businesses and co-operatives exemplify our grassroots, just-do-it attitude. If there is a need that isn't being met – either for a product or a service – someone or some group will step forward to meet it. From information technology to manufacturing, there are opportunities galore in Saskatchewan for people with the initiative to seize them. The theme for Co-op Week is "Own Your Own Future," and the theme for Small Business Week is "A World Without Boundaries, Open to New Markets." Both themes speak to the confidence and optimism that we can feel in Saskatchewan today.

One new area of the economy which presents terrific opportunities for both small business and co-ops is biofuels – ethanol and biodiesel. In June, Premier Calvert launched the Saskatchewan Biofuels Investment Opportunity (SaskBIO) program. SaskBIO will help us maintain our leadership role in the Canadian renewable fuels industry by encouraging the development of biofuel facilities that have significant farmer or community investment. I look forward to the day when the Saskatchewan landscape is dotted with producer-owned biofuel plants. Along with conservation measures, ethanol and biodiesel can serve as a means to help end our reliance on non-renewable oil, bring new prosperity to rural areas and contribute to the fight against climate change.

There are approximately 38,000 small businesses and 1,100 co-ops operating in the Saskatchewan economy. Their owners, employees and members provide the foundation for strong, vibrant communities. The week of October 14 to 20 affords us an opportunity to thank small businesses and co-ops for their contributions to our way of life.

Lon Borgerson

Lon Borgerson

SASKBIO SUPPORTS FARMER-COMMUNITY BIOFUELS OPPORTUNITIES

The provincial government has launched the Saskatchewan Biofuels Investment Opportunity (SaskBIO) program to ensure the province is an attractive place to build a sustainable biofuels industry.

With more than 40 per cent of Canada's agricultural feedstock, and significant forest resources, Saskatchewan is well positioned to establish a sustainable biofuels industry that can bring economic and environmental benefits to the province.

"The government and people of Saskatchewan have embraced ethanol and biodiesel as a means to help end our reliance on non-renewable oil, bring new prosperity to rural areas and contribute to the fight against climate change," said Regional Economic and Co-operative Development Minister Lon Borgerson when the program was announced in June 2007. Consultations by the department with a wide range of stakeholders indicated there is a strong desire for local community and producer ownership in the industry, he added.

SaskBIO is a four-year, $80 million program that provides repayable contributions of up to $10 million per project toward the construction or expansion of transportation biofuels production facilities in the province. Projects must have a minimum of five per cent investment by farmers and/or community investors, with the contribution amount linked to the size of farmer-community investment in the project. Several groups at various locations around the province are considering or planning biofuels facilities.

The SaskBIO program was announced in Tisdale, where area producers and institutional investors have created EnSask Biofuels, and are planning to convert a former alfalfa dehydration plant to ethanol production. EnSask CEO James Leier says the program is significant because, depending on the level of local investment, the SaskBIO contribution could represent eight to 10 per cent of the total cost of a facility.

"That contribution could go a long way to enhance the investment by producers and the community," Leier notes, "and it helps keep Saskatchewan very competitive in developing a biofuels industry."

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call James Leier, EnSask Biofuels, at 873-2605; or
- Call Ken Magnus, RECD, at 787-0917 or e-mail ken.magnus@gov.sk.ca.

Farmer Direct Sales Manager Jason Freeman says farmer co-operation is key to economic sustainability for organic family farms.

CO-OPERATIVE MARKETS SASKATCHEWAN ORGANIC PRODUCTS TO THE WORLD

Farmer Direct Co-operative Ltd. is a farmer-driven business that provides customers around the world with ethically grown and traded foods from Saskatchewan. The Regina-based co-op was established in 2002 to market organic products grown or raised in Saskatchewan. It began with three members, and generated $900,000 in sales that year.

The co-op continues to grow, indicating strong consumer interest in high quality organic crops. Farmer Direct now has 70 members and six employees, and expects to reach $5 million in sales in the current year. The product line includes certified organic barley, durum, oats, flax, hemp, lentils, mustard, peas and wheat, as well as certified organic beef cattle. "What we're most encouraged about is the increasing number of organic farmer co-ops springing up across western Canada," says Jason Freeman, the co-operative's Sales Manager. "We firmly believe that co-operation amongst farmers is the way to economic sustainability for the organic family farm."

Besides blazing a trail for other organic producer co-ops, Farmer Direct has created a new pricing model called the fairDeal. It provides farmers with a price that covers the cost of production, pays them for their labour and provides a profit that can be reinvested in their farm or community. The co-op has implemented a fairDeal agreement with hempseed buyers, and has launched five fairDeal pilot projects with companies that are selling certified organic beef, flax oil, maple syrup, hemp seed ingredients and pulses. Farmer Direct has also made presentations on the pricing model at two annual meetings of the Domestic Fair Trade Working Group Summit, attended by farmer co-ops, about 50 organic food companies, farm labour organizations and non-government organizations.

Farmer Direct's achievements were recognized with a Co-operative Merit Award in 2006.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Jason Freeman, Farmer Direct Co-operative Ltd., at 352-2444 (ext. 222); or
- Call Wayne Thrasher, RECD, at 787-0190 or e-mail wayne.thrasher@gov.sk.ca

BIZPAL SETS THE STANDARD

Cornerstone REDA's Judy Riddell (right), with Carlyle Town Administrator Huquette Lutz, says BizPal is an excellent tool for supporting entrepreneurs and helping communities grow.

Entrepreneurs welcome any initiative that simplifies and speeds up the process of getting approvals, permits and licences for a new business. BizPaL, an interactive, one-stop website at www.BizPaL.gov.sk.ca is doing just that for businesses in Saskatchewan.

Instead of spending hours or days finding out what's required to establish a business, entrepreneurs and economic developers can get the information they need, as well as links to forms and contact information, in minutes. Governments like the service because it lowers their costs for providing information and increases the likelihood of compliance by making regulatory information more accessible.

BizPaL is a partnership of federal, provincial and local governments, co-ordinated in this province by Saskatchewan Industry and Resources. It first launched in Saskatoon in June 2006, and the service is now available in eight cities and 17 other municipalities across the province. Carlyle was the first town to come on board, followed by several more around the province, with help from Saskatchewan Regional Economic and Co-operative Development and local Regional Economic Development Authorities (REDAs).

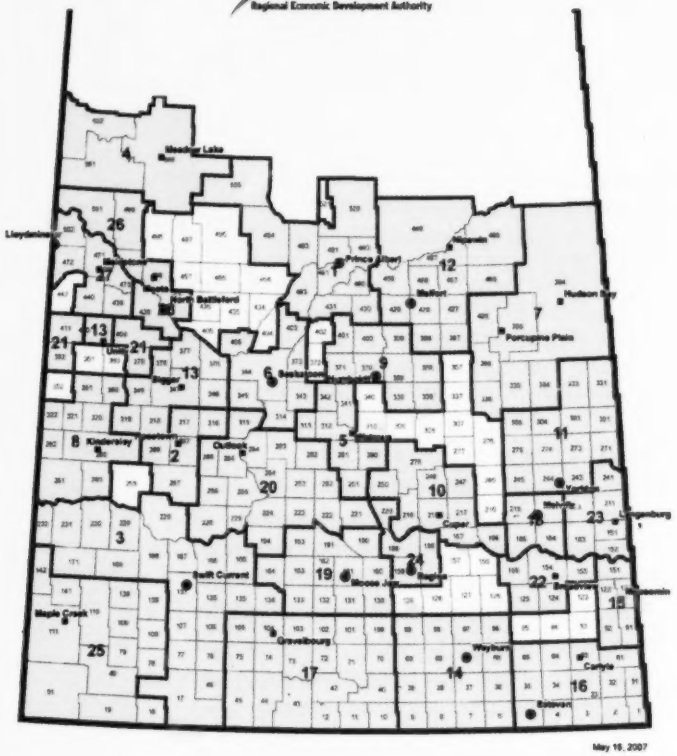
"We took training on BizPaL first," says Judy Riddell, Executive Director for Cornerstone REDA, "and then we worked with the town administrator to get Carlyle online. With that experience to build on, we're now working with Estevan, Oxbow and Redvers to assist them. BizPaL is an excellent example of how we can support our entrepreneurs and help our communities to grow," she adds.

The BizPaL initiative has won several national and local awards, including a 2006 Diamond Award from among 75 entrants to the Canadian Information Productivity Awards. Saskatchewan is regarded informally as setting the "gold standard" for BizPaL because of its rapid adoption in large and small communities, and because members of the BizPaL team have shared their knowledge and best practices with other jurisdictions. Premier Lorne Calvert recently recognized the initiative by presenting the BizPaL team with the 2007 Premier's Award of Excellence for Quality Service.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Judy Riddell, Cornerstone REDA, at 453-6097; or
- Call Marilyn Day, RECD, at 787-8710 or e-mail marilyn.day@gov.sk.ca.

INVENTORY OF MAJOR PROJECTS IN SASKATCHEWAN AVAILABLE ONLINE



1. Prince Albert	953-4372	16. Cornerstone	453-6097
2. Entrepreneurs 2000	882-1300	17. Red Coat	648-3525
3. Southwest	778-4240	18. South Parkland	728-6878
4. Northwest	236-2407	19. Moose Jaw	693-7332
5. Long Lake	946-3011	20. Mid Sask	867-9553
6. Saskatoon	664-0723	21. Border	843-3327
7. Etomami Valley	865-3356	22. Mainline	696-2550
8. West Central	463-1997	23. Yellowhead	743-5177
9. Carlton Trail	682-2631	24. Regina	522-0227
10. Touchwood Hills	723-4688	25. Cypress Hills	297-2566
11. Good Spirit	783-7332	26. Prairie to Pine	892-2544
12. North East	862-6732	27. Big Gully	893-4156
13. Midwest	948-2295	28. Battlefords	446-7506
14. South East	842-8001		
15. Gateway	435-3177		

ESTEVAN DAY CARE HAS A PLACE TO CALL HOME

When the Estevan Day Care Co-op celebrated its grand opening in March 2007, it marked a major milestone. For the first time in 30 years of operation, the Co-op owned its own building. "This really was a community effort," says day care Director Beth Branvold.

The story behind the grand opening began in the spring of 2006 when the co-op was informed that the lease on its facility, in a former elementary school, would be canceled. The Board saw this as an opportunity to purchase a facility, which would offer more flexibility in designing and building a day care. However, very few buildings were available.

Branvold approached the Knights of Columbus, and after some discussion, the Knights decided to sell their building to the co-op. Transforming what was essentially an open meeting area into a day care required a hectic two months of renovations by staff, board members, parents and volunteers. Five large windows, washrooms, and a security system were installed, and an outdoor play area was created. The facility also houses the Pure Energy Early Learning Centre, reflecting the latest thinking on early childhood development.

"With the early learning component and the after-school component we're planning to introduce soon," Branvold notes, "more than ever we're helping the young children of Estevan to learn."

The Estevan Day Care Co-operative's 10 staff members provide care to more than 40 member families. The co-op is waiting for the provincial government to approve more spaces, as the current waiting list is almost 200 children.

Beth Branvold was recently nominated for a SaskPower Women of Today Award, in part for her contributions of time and energy to the day care.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Beth Branvold, Estevan Day Care Co-op, at 634-5868; or
- Call Linda Mack, RECD, at 637-4505 or e-mail linda.mack@gov.sk.ca.

PRAIRIE BERRIES EXPANDING AND ADDING VALUE

When Sandra and Ken Purdy planted their first acre of saskatoon bushes in 1993 to diversify their family farm near Keeler, they were also making a strong statement about the way they choose to live. "Our ability to live and work in rural Saskatchewan keeps us grounded to what's really important," says Sandy.

Prairie Berries quickly grew from a sideline to a full-time operation, with a primary processing plant and a second plant producing products such as pie fillings, pies, fruit toppings, jams, concentrates and dried berries. Their pie filling and fruit topping were judged the best new products in their categories at the prestigious Canadian Fine Food Show in 2002. Prairie Berries has also received the Moose Jaw Business Excellence Award for exceptional performance in exporting Saskatchewan products nationally and internationally.

Prairie Berries is currently in the midst of another growth spurt, in part because of the connections Sandy made while facilitating workshops for the Moose Jaw Regional Economic Development Authority's (REDA's) Value-Added Agriculture Cluster Initiative, and later helping the REDA with a cluster analysis of value-added agri-businesses in the region.

"Participating in the cluster initiative made me aware of other service providers that were right here in my back yard," Sandy says. "The REDA, too, has been a wealth of knowledge in networking us with others who potentially could help us achieve our goals."

The Purdys do have ambitious goals. They planted 100,000 saskatoon bushes this spring on 120 acres, making Prairie Berries the largest saskatoon berry farm in Canada. In about four years, the berry farm will produce about 250,000 pounds of berries annually.

Will expanded production and processing tap out the capacity of local suppliers to service Prairie Berries? "We've only begun," Sandra responds. "We're excited by the opportunity to work with more local companies in the region. I have a strong belief in working with others for everyone's benefit."

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Sandy Purdy, Prairie Berries, at 788-2018 or visit www.prairieberries.com; or
- Call Barb Field, RECD, at 694-3623, or e-mail barb.field@gov.sk.ca.

TEAMWORK BUILDING HIGH PERFORMING ECONOMY IN NORTHWEST

"If it's good for one sector or group, it's good for all," is the way Barry Lewis describes the team spirit that is helping to build a vibrant economy in Saskatchewan's northwest. Lewis is the Economic Development Officer for the Northwest Regional Economic Development Authority (REDA), based in Meadow Lake.

"The Town and the Chamber of Commerce are very progressive and supportive," Lewis says. "What's interesting is that Northwest REDA also forged partnerships with groups that emerged to answer a specific need."

For example, local people formed the Northwest Tourism Development Group to promote the region to visitors and potential investors. With support from the REDA, the group has produced an information guide, Northwest Saskatchewan Calling, that highlights the natural resources and tourism experiences the region has to offer. The Meadow Advantage Group (www.meadowadvantage.com) began with a focus on establishing an air link with Fort McMurray, but has expanded to include "branding" the community as an attractive place to live, including providing detailed (and favourable) cost-of-living comparisons with nearby Alberta.

"It's sometimes difficult to say where one group's initiative leaves off and another begins," Lewis observes. "The various groups have brought together positive, innovative thinkers, and the marketing and branding efforts are paying off. In the last six months, we've seen extraordinary activity with the sale of residential lots in the town. Optimism is at an all-time high, and forestry, tourism, agriculture, biofuels and the oil and gas sectors are all active within the region," he continues.

"We can't say if it's one initiative or another that's working, but there's the sense that the seeds we've been planting are growing."

Still, Lewis sees room for more collaboration, and more growth. For instance, a quarter-million visitors pass through nearby Meadow Lake Provincial Park each year, "but many of them have never visited the Town of Meadow Lake," Lewis exclaims. "What a huge, untapped market for us!"

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Barry Lewis, Northwest REDA, at 236-2407 or e-mail nwreda.edo@sasktel.net; or
- Call RECD in North Battleford at 446-7444.

BIG RIVER PROMOTING ITS WILD SIDE

The community of Big River is building its future on the wild side, with help from many volunteers and assistance from the regional office of Regional Economic and Co-operative Development (RECD) in Prince Albert.

The rebuilding began with a public meeting organized by the town and RM of Big River, to discuss future options. The RECD regional office helped facilitate the meeting, where many people signed up to be members of an economic development committee. They branded the region "The Wild West Side of the National Park" and raised money from tourism businesses to create a promotional package and a trade show booth, which they used at trade shows in Saskatoon and Lloydminster.

The committee has created a tourism centre, which will be the springboard for further economic development. Future developments in the business plan include a business incubation centre, a craft store, a Small Business Loans Association and a local chapter of the Business Mentorship Institute. The committee has also engaged an entertainment company that has shot footage in Big River and area for a planned documentary on the community's economic development activities.

"We've started to market our assets, like year-round tourism and our well-trained workforce, to create future development," says committee member and local realtor Trischa Doucette. "For now, we're focusing on tourism, where there are plenty of opportunities to start small businesses."

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Linda McKenzie, Big River Tourism Centre, at 469-2302 or e-mail bigriverеconomicdevelopment@hotmail.com; or
- Call Warren McLeod, RECD, at 953-3226 or e-mail warren.mcleod@gov.sk.ca.

L to R: Economic Development Volunteers Vera Connolly, Bill Gerow and Trischa Doucette

CO-OP STUDENTS LEARN BY DOING AT CBD

The Centre for Business Development (CBD) in downtown Regina was established in 1998 as a partnership between the federal and provincial governments to provide a one-stop location for people looking for business information and related services.

The CBD is made up of 10 member organizations, including six that are on-site at the CBD location on Rose Street, and four associate members, including: Business Infosource – Regional Site for the Canada-Saskatchewan Business Service Centre; Conseil de la Cooperation de la Saskatchewan; Saskatchewan Regional Economic and Co-operative Development; Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation; SaskNative Economic Development Corporation; Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan Inc.; Entrepreneurial Foundation of Saskatchewan Inc.; Regina Public Library; Regina Regional Economic Development Authority; and Western Economic Diversification.

In 2006, CBD staff handled close to 4,800 interactions with clients, including assistance with the comprehensive business library, where clients can access information on all aspects of starting and operating a business. The Centre also provides one-on-one business counseling, single-window pathfinding and referral services to 67 provincial and 47 federal departments and agencies, as well as business seminars and workshops, all free of charge.

In 2003, the CBD added another dimension, providing a workplace where University of Regina co-op students can gain valuable, hands-on learning experiences while assisting the public. Ten students have completed four or eight-month work terms at the Centre.

"I learned valuable skills during my work term, such as how to deal with people in a professional manner, and how to use creative feedback from clients and co-workers," says Olivia Wang, a former co-op student who spent four months at the CBD. Michael Laurans, the student currently working at the Centre, says the experience of searching out information for clients has made him a better researcher. "The information is always out there; you have to know how to find it. When I tell clients the statistical information I can provide them with, they're amazed. For anyone interested in going into business, I'd highly recommend checking out the Centre for Business Development."

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Daniel Bean, RECD, at 787-6179, or e-mail daniel.bean@gov.sk.ca.

Standing left to right:
Daniel Bean, Charlotte McCall ; Marty Spreacker ; Sharon Sugar, Michael Laurans; Rachel Mielke; Debra Needham Moshurchak
Seated Left to Right:
Brenda Leib, Janet Watson

WATSON PRODUCERS PLANNING CO-OPERATIVE ETHANOL FACILITY

Agricultural producers at Watson are working to ensure that their area benefits from the increasing interest in, and demand for, renewable fuels. A group of producers have banded together to form the Quill Plains Biofuel Co-operative Ltd., with the intent of building an ethanol production facility near Watson.

Currently, the co-operative is developing a business plan for the project, with $300,000 in funding from the federal Biofuels Opportunities for Producers Initiative (BOPI). The co-operative is an offshoot of the Quill Plains Economic Development Alliance, which sees an ethanol facility as a way for producers to increase their share of benefits flowing from biofuels production beyond simply delivering feedstock. The Carlton Trail Regional Economic Development Authority (REDA) provides economic development services to the alliance, and has provided information and advice to the biofuels co-operative during the organizational and planning phases.

"It's taken a great deal of community vision, co-operation and commitment to get the project to this stage," observes Edie Spagrud, the Economic Development Officer with Carlton Trail REDA, which is based in Humboldt. "We're excited about the prospects of having an ethanol production facility to bolster agriculture in this region."

Funding for the BOPI program in the province is delivered through the Saskatchewan Council for Community Development. Under BOPI, at least 25 per cent of project cost must come from the industry, with one-third of that provided by producers.

Once the business plan is complete and approved, Spagrud says the co-operative will also be eligible to apply for assistance from the provincial Saskatchewan Biofuels Investment Opportunity (SaskBIO) program, which provides repayable contributions of up to $10 million, based on the level of producer-community investment in the project.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Edie Spagrud, Carlton Trail REDA, at 682-2631 or e-mail ctreda@sasktel.net; or
- Call Kevin Fruhstuk, RECD, at 933-5757 or e-mail kevin.fruhstuk@gov.sk.ca.

COMMUNITIES, SENIORS EMBRACE LIFE LEASE HOUSING

With help from Cypress Hills Regional Economic Development Authority (REDA), two communities in southwest Saskatchewan have developed new housing for seniors. Three other communities are investigating similar housing developments, also with help from the REDA.

"The towns were losing seniors looking for the kind of higher-end living available in bigger cities," says Jay Meyer, General Manager for Cypress Hills REDA. "However, most seniors want to stay in their own communities, close to family and friends. Life Lease housing answers this need, and also works well for the communities."

Life Lease housing combines equity ownership with the flexibility that usually comes with condo living. Owners invest in a "life lease" with the assurance that they will receive 100 per cent of their initial investment when they vacate the suite. Tenants also pay a monthly charge to cover operating and maintenance costs for the development.

Cypress Hills REDA served as project manager for Creekside Estates, a $2.7 million, 14-unit complex in Maple Creek, and East View Court, a three-suite, $475,000 development in Gull Lake. East View Court was sponsored by the Town of Gull Lake and three adjacent rural municipalities: Carmichael, Gull Lake and Webb. Local contractors were used as much as possible during construction, and both developments have contracted caretakers to provide maintenance services. East View Court is now marketing a second phase.

"The REDA is also working with Eastend, where the community has expressed strong interest in the idea," Meyer says. "We conducted a feasibility study in Frontier, and found a need for three to five units there. An independent consultant found a need for an eight to 10 unit complex in Shaunavon, and the town is now looking for other partners," notes Meyer.

"Creating new housing for seniors also puts houses on the market in their community, where the supply is limited. All of those houses sold in a short period," he adds.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Jay Meyer, Cypress Hills REDA, at 297-2566, or e-mail CHREDADC@sasktel.net; or
- Call Dianne Sletten, RECD, at 778-8415, or e-mail dianne.sletten@gov.sk.ca.

"BEST KEPT SECRET" A SECRET NO LONGER

The project is called "The Best Kept Secret," but the goal is to get the word out about the advantages of living in Melville and the surrounding region. And, it's working. In the past year, more than 75 families have moved into Melville and area, many of them from a target area in Ontario identified by surveys and word-of-mouth feedback.

Michael Halyk, the Economic Development Officer for South Parkland Regional Economic Development Authority (REDA), traveled to Ontario earlier this year, making presentations and attending trade shows in Cambridge, Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo.

"We know there are families in large cities who want to relocate to smaller, safer communities," Halyk explains. "There are also people in rural Ontario who are feeling pressures from urban areas, and are looking for land to purchase, or a place to retire."

Halyk headed to Ontario with "Best Kept Secret" information packages and CDs highlighting employment opportunities and the excellent lifestyle opportunities in the region, along with copies of the Melville and District Business Directory. South Parkland REDA upgraded its website to promote the Secret campaign. "We always ask people why they contacted us, and it's clear the Internet is their main tool for finding information," Halyk observes.

Funding for the initiative came from member communities in the REDA and from a special project fund available to REDAs from the department of Regional Economic and Co-operative Development.

Response to the promotion has been overwhelming, Halyk notes. "The positive indicators are there," he adds. "We've seen a nice number of small business starts, and our major employers are hiring. Any homes for sale are gone in a day or two. We've now turned Best Kept Secret into a summer tourism promotion, and if this trend continues, I foresee ongoing branding of our region as Eastern Saskatchewan's Best Kept Secret."

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Michael Halyk, South Parkland REDA, at 728-6878 or 728-6855; or e-mail edo.sp@spreda.ca; or visit www.spreda.ca; or
- Call Jenay Werle, RECD, at 786-1499, or e-mail jenay.werle@gov.sk.ca.

COMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Phone	Web/Email	Location
Sept. 15-18	Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) National Conference	244-5521	www.edac.ca/ admin@edac.ca	Saskatoon
Oct. 14-20	Small Business Week	1-877-232-2269	www.bdc.ca/en/about/events	National
Oct. 14-20	Co-operatives Week	787-0190	wayne.thrasher@gov.sk.ca	Provincial
Oct. 17-18	Business to Business Expo	757-4658	www.reginachamber.com info@reginachamber.com	Regina
Oct. 18-19	Think Future Labour Attraction and Retention Conference	773-4240	www.southwestreda.ca/ projects_and services.htm kherron@southwestreda.ca	Swift Current
various dates	Various learning events	1-800-667-4374	www.canadabusiness.ca/sask/ saskatchewan@cbsc.ic.gc.ca	Regina and Saskatoon

Global Focus for Small Business Week, October 14-20, 2007

This year's Small Business Week theme, "A world without boundaries, open to new markets," highlights the many business opportunities being created in the world's developing economies.

In Saskatchewan, the Province proclaims Small Business Week to recognize our 38,000 small businesses, employing more than a third of the province's working population and providing the foundation for strong, vibrant communities. Some of these home-grown businesses have become national and international success stories. Watch for Small Business Week events in your community or region this October.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Cathy Lake, RECD, at 787-8085 or e-mail cathy.lake@gov.sk.ca.

Province Observes Co-op Week in October

Saskatchewan people will observe Co-op Week from October 14-20, 2007, and Credit Union Day on October 18. The theme for this year's events - Own Your Own Future: Celebrate Co-op Week - emphasizes the benefits of local ownership and democratic decision-making that is built into co-op and credit union governance structures.

The Co-op flag will be raised in the rotunda of the Legislative Building at 11:45 a.m. on October 15. Immediately following, the Co-op Council of Regina will host a luncheon. Call Wayne Thrasher at 787-0190 if you wish to attend.

During the evening of October 15; awards in three categories will be announced at the Saskatchewan Co-operative Merit Awards Dinner at the Delta Regina. Bob Effa of Yorkton and Laura Vance of Swift Current have been selected for the *Co-operative Achievement Award*, which recognizes long and mentorious service by an individual. Wayne Thompson, who served as CEO of Federated Co-operatives Limited for almost 25 years, will be recognized posthumously with the *Co-operative Contribution Award* for his contributions to community life, and the inspiration he gave to others.

A new award, the *Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Leadership Award*, recognizes outstanding contributions by young people to co-operatives and credit unions in the province. Michael Crowter of White Fox and Tricia McNair of Regina are the recipients of this award. Call the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association at 244-3702 for tickets to the Awards Dinner.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Call Wayne Thrasher, RECD, at 787-0190 or e-mail Wayne.Thrasher@.gov.sk.ca.

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SASKBIZ

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